Expansion of Public Sector Steel Plants

7514. SHRI GUNDAPPA KORWAR: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of public sector steel plant units which are under expansion;

(b) whether there are any units which have already been commissioned but are laying idle or are working below their installed capacity; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (c) Integrated steel plants of SAIL at Durgapur, Rourkela and Bokaro are currently under different stages of modernisation. These projects are yet to be fully completed. Units taken up for modernisation at Durgapur and Rourkela Steel Plants are being progressively commissioned and operating at varying levels of capacity utilisation. None of the major units are idle, although some of the modernised units are working below their full capacity due to phased commissioning, stabilisation process, paucity of orders etc.

The Visakhapatnam Steel Plant which was commissioned in July, 1992 is presently in the process of optimising its production and is likely to achieve 100% capacity utilisation by 1996-97.

Consumption of Coin Blanks

7515. SHRI JOBON ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 4176 answered in the Rajya Sabha on the 28th April, 1995 and state:

(a) whether the total consumption of coin blanks by all the four mints put together ranges from 1600 to 1800 million pieces if so, what are the reasons that Government is not utilising the total production of Salem Steel Plant; and

(b) whether Government proposed to take any step to step up the order position of coin blanks to SSP?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The consumption of coin blanks by all the four Mints put together ranges from 1600 to 1800 million pieces. Salem Steel Plant can meet the demand through direct supply of 3000 tonnes and the balance, if any, by conversion of Cold Rolled Stainless Steel Strips to Coin blanks abroad.

The total requirement of coin blanks is met through various sources, which include own production of coin blanks by the India Government Mints as well as procurement from external sources which inter alia include supplies made by Salem Steel Plant.

(b) Ministry of Steel has been assisting SSP enabling it to secure maximum orders from India Government Mint. Besides, SSP has also been advised to explore export markets as well as other indigeneous uses, so as to step up the capacity utilisation of the Coin blanking line.

MOU on project management and consultancy by SAIL

7516. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Steel Authority of India Ltd. has signed MOUs with the four international companies for export of project management and consultancy in the global steel market; and

(b) if so, the details of MOUs and the name of the four companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. SAIL has signed Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation for